

## GRANTEE MONITORING

Grantee Name	Choices Pregnancy Center
Location/Address	PO Box 22, 231 E 2 <sup>nd</sup> St., Redwood Falls, MN 56283
Date and Location of Site Visit	10/4/17, 1 p.m. @ 231 E 2 <sup>nd</sup> St., Redwood Falls MN 56283
Grantee Participants	Carrie Meyers, Executive Director Gwenn Harrington, EWYL Coordinator
MDH Participant(s)	Mary Ottman, Grant Manager
Grant Agreement #/PO #	#285532

### **PURPOSE:**

In accordance with the MDH Policy 238.01 Grantee Monitoring, MDH will conduct at least one monitoring visit per grant period on all state grants of over \$50,000, and at least annual monitoring visits on grants of over \$250,000.

The purpose of the grant monitoring visit is to review and ensure progress against the grants' goals, to address any problems or issues before the end of the grant period and to build rapport between the state agency and the grantees. This visit may cover topics such as statutory compliance; challenges faced by the grantee, modifications made to the grant program, program outcomes, grantee policies and procedures, grantee governance, and training and technical assistance needs.

The findings or information obtained through this monitoring activity will be used:

- To ascertain how MDH program funds are being utilized
- To provide targeted technical assistance needs
- To improve program implementation performance
- To suggest other training needs
- In future funding decisions

### **OVERVIEW**

1. Is the Grantee's non-profit 501(c) 3 status current? [Yes](#)

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2. Does the Grantee have a central file containing the official records for this grant agreement and/or amendment? [Yes](#)
3. Where is this central file located? [Executive Director's desk filing cabinet, Ex. Director's laptop](#)
4. Who is responsible for this central file? [Carrie Meyers, Ex. Director](#)
5. Does the central file include
  - The grant proposal? [Yes](#)
  - The award letter? [Yes](#)
  - The signed grant agreement and any/all amendments? [Yes](#)
  - Any/all requests and/or approvals for scope/budget changes? [Yes](#)
  - The work plan? [Yes](#)
  - Any/all payment requests (invoices)? [Yes](#)
  - Any/all signed subcontracts? Not applicable (no subcontracts) [Yes](#)
  - Any/all Progress Reports? [Yes](#)

## REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

1. Does the organization meet all reporting requirements as outlined in the grant agreement and/or amendment? [Yes](#)
2. Are expenditure reports submitted timely and accurately? [Yes](#)
3. Are progress reports submitted with all required information and in a timely manner?  
[Yes](#)

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### CONTRACTUAL

1. Does the Grantee have written policies or procedures addressing use of contractors and/or subcontractors? [Yes](#)
2. Were any sub-contractors paid from the MDH grant required to sign a contractual agreement outlining services to be rendered, duration of engagement, and pay rate? [Yes](#)
3. Was the contractual agreement(s) reviewed and approved by MDH before implementation? [Yes](#)

### PERSONNEL POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND PRACTICES OF THE GRANTEE

1. Are time distribution records (e.g., time-sheets) maintained to show how employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind to, the MDH grant and who work on multiple projects/programs spend their time? [Yes](#)
2. Do personnel and/or payroll records show dates of hire/termination, immigration status if applicable, actual hours of time worked, leave time, federal and state programs worked on, and earning for all employees who are funded through, or contributed in kind, to the MDH grant? [Yes](#)
3. Does the Grantee have policies and procedures in writing regarding:
  - Payroll? [Yes](#)
  - Travel? [Yes](#)
  - Overtime? [Yes \(no overtime offered; compensation policy addresses\)](#)
  - Timesheets? [Yes](#)
  - Taxes? [Unsure – discussed at SV meeting.](#)
  - Purchasing? [Yes](#)
  - Compensated time off? [Yes](#)
4. Are employees time sheets approved? [Yes](#)  
  
By whom (what position)? [Support staff by Ex. Director; Ex. Director by Personnel Committee/Board](#)  
  
By the Executive Director? [\(see above\)](#)
5. Does the Grantee's payroll preparation and distribution involve more than one employee? [Yes](#)
6. Does an authorized official approve all checks before being signed? [Yes](#)

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Additional Comments:

Choices PC is a long time PA grantee and has their financial and administrative records in good order.

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### PROGRAMMATIC QUESTIONS

Please use this space to answer all questions.

#### ***Program History***

- When was your program started? Why was it started? Choices PC began offering Earn While You Learn in 2001 to provide support, information and material assistance to women in challenging pregnancy situations.
- What need does your program fulfill? Meets the need for pregnancy, childbirth and parenting education, emotional and practical support to help women carry pregnancies to term and prepare for parenting.
- How has the program grown or changed since its beginning? Starting EWYL attracted many new clients. When the Positive Alternatives grant was obtained in 2006, we were able to add a staff person specifically to coordinate that program, expand our hours and our space to better serve those clients. We have continued to improve and expand the classes available, update our materials, offer incentives, and receive training. Our EWYL coordinator and (former) director have now completed training (and new director has started process) to become certified life coaches so that this service may be offered as well to help clients become more self-sufficient and confident in their parenting and other areas of life.

#### ***Grantee's Target population***

- Who does the organization primarily serve? Pregnant and parenting women in the surrounding Redwood Falls area, and their partners.
- What is the program's demographic and geographic coverage? Primarily Redwood and Renville county; most clients come from a 30 mile radius of Redwood Falls.
- Review recent Demographic reporting. The majority of our clients are in their 20s and single. Most are Caucasian or Native American. It is common for them to start the program in the third trimester of pregnancy.

#### ***Leadership and Governance***

- Effective Board: How many board members currently serve, who are they? Nine members come from various backgrounds, including education, ministry, business, finance, and agriculture. Seven female and two male members.
- How often do they meet? How are they informed of organization's progress and challenges? The board meets every other month. The director's report is given at each meeting, summarizing challenges, statistics, and accomplishments.

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- How supportive is the Board of the program? *Very supportive. We are getting stronger as we have been restructuring the board and reviewing policies to become more effective. Board is taking “ownership” of fundraising and publicity.*
- How is the program staffed? Who is responsible for the supervision of grant staff? *Director supervises EWYL coordinator and Manager of Online Communications. All are part time. Both director and EWYL coordinator have some hours with the grant and some through other non-grant programs.*
  - How are staff evaluated on their performance? How long have PA staff been employed there? *Staff evaluations occur annually, with individual goals being re-evaluated every six months. New director hired July 5, 2017; EWLY coordinator and manager of online communications hired in 2014.*
  - How are staff background checks done? *Through BCA or Christian Background checks.*
  - What is your organization’s policy on complaints for staff and clients? *All complaints are directed to the Executive Director (unless grievance is with director; then to Board). Policy addressed in staff P&P manual, pg. 30, “Addressing a Grievance.”*

### **Budget**

- Does the current budget reflect your work plan activities? *yes*
- Is the budget accurate for the project size/scope? *yes*
- Do you have any challenges with the budget or invoicing? *no*
- Has your Financial Reconciliation taken place? *Uncertain*
- If you have an elevated risk designation, and/ or your Financial Reconciliation report cited any concerns, these will be discussed.

### **Review Work Plan including:**

#### **Partners**

- If applicable: how are people referred to the program? Are there any barriers encountered with referral sources? What is your most common referral source? *People are referred by local agencies, medical services, schools, public health, probation, social services, and by friends and relatives. Our website and social media inform and attract potential clients as well. Our largest referral source is friends who have been former clients; human services is second largest.*

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- Challenges with partners or specific counties? *Difficult to keep everyone informed about our program when there is turnover. Networking and connections are crucial and must be kept up on a regular basis.*

### Work Plan

- Review your 2016 – 19 grant application's description of the program you are asking to be funded. On your work plan note the services and activities you said you would provide and the number of clients you would serve.
- **Prepare a short summary of your current program(s) and the number of clients being served.** How does what you describe in the application compare with what you are currently providing? Have any programs and/or activities or services been added or removed? Have the number of clients being served per quarter decreased or increased since June 2016? Is there anything in particular you want to share about your current program to explain its current status? *Positive Alternatives supports Choices PC's EWYL program, including staffing, office space, educational materials, training, and incentives. While continuing this program we are pursuing training to offer life coaching to our clients (two individuals have completed; new director still in process). Client numbers have been fairly steady. We are always working to improve our program so that we can offer quality education and services that clients find valuable and want to return for.*
- Do you anticipate making any changes to the 2017-18 Work Plan? If so, in what way and for what reasons? *Not at this time.*

### Participants:

- What type of outreach does the organization put into action? What is working well? What are more the challenging aspects to finding or retaining clients? *We use social media posts and educational blogs to drive traffic to our website. We have seen our reach grow a great deal in this area, although it is difficult to know for sure how many clients actually find us because of this. We intentionally connect with other professionals through Redwood County Child Protection Team, Early Childhood Coalition, and other opportunities for personal contact. This helps to keep the program in front of others and remind them of the option to refer clients to us. We work hard to provide valuable services for our clients so they tell their friends about us. Many challenges make retaining clients difficult: chaotic lives, unreliable*

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transportation, health and employment issues, transient lifestyles, and changing situations all cause barriers at times. Clients usually appreciate and respond to texts that encourage them to reschedule a missed appointment or stop back in when they have been away for a while.

**Data:**

- How is program data collected and by whom? Is data collected useful to agency? We use eKyros Centerpiece to track clients' appointments and information.
- Anything we can do to help or simplify data collection? Not at this time. As new director, I am still becoming acquainted with the current processes!

**Review Evaluation**

- Your 2015-16 Evaluation Report Summary will be discussed (If you were a past grantee).
- Your 2016-17 Evaluation Plan will be reviewed. Any suggestions provided in your 2015-16 Report Summary should be included in the plan, if you are continuing a similar evaluation. If you are planning a new evaluation, details will be discussed. Do you have any questions on your evaluation? Evaluation was discussed for year 2 of the grant cycle. Plans are underway to evaluate prenatal care follow up and referral sources and their follow up.

**Miscellaneous**

- Anything else you would like to share?
- Anything else we haven't asked?

**What can we do to help?**

- Trainings and Grantee meetings useful for grantee? Any topic suggestions?
- Feedback or suggestions for the state?
- Is there any way MDH can assist you to better equip your success in the Positive Alternatives Grant Program?

**Summary:**

Choices Pregnancy Center has experienced a major staff change since the last site visit. The founding Executive Director (ED) for over 20 years has retired and a new director has been hired. The newly hired ED began her tenure this summer and was able to be trained by the outgoing ED. As an established nonprofit in the Redwood Falls area, the new ED has a good track record to follow.

The new ED has begun her life coaching training and will be able to provide backup mentoring to clients soon. Currently the EWYL coordinator is trained as a life coach and is providing all mentoring for clients. The retired ED is also a trained life coach and will fill in with clients for the next year or so as needed. Staff highly agree and feel that life coaching has become an important part of the EWYL program and has had a huge impact on the well-being of clientele being served in the community.



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One area of challenge for the new Ed will be increasing community outreach and connections as she gets accustomed to her new role. It is her goal to increase the visibility of the Center, thus ultimately impacting the number of clients who walk through the door. The staff realize that community connections need to be remade and efforts to work alongside new partners need to be forged for the Center to remain viable and thriving. Servicing a wider area of nearby south central Minnesota was also discussed as there is little assistance available for women in unplanned pregnancy situations in many of the outlying small communities.

Questions on record retention, budgets, and program reporting were discussed. Evaluation expectations were also pointed out. Future planning for the organization was a topic of discussion. The staff realize that they have an exciting opportunity with new staff to reassess the direction of the Center.

Although changes in staff can be a challenge for any organization, the new ED transition for Choices PC seems to be going seamlessly. Throughout the transition they have continued to maintain and manage their PA grant responsibility. I look forward to the continued partnership with Choices PC as a grantee with the Positive Alternatives Grant Program for the remainder of the grant cycle.

**Date: October 10, 2017**

**Grant Manager: Mary Ottman**